

Preschool

Keys to prevention at this age

- Discussing family values
- Modeling healthy behaviors
- Encouraging your child to participate in healthy activities

Since the foundation for all healthy habits — from nutritious eating to face washing — is laid down during the preschool years, this is a great time to set the stage for a drug-free life.

Key Influences in your preschooler's world:

- Parent/Caregiver
- Older siblings
- Other youth
- Media (TV, radio, etc.)

Substances in your preschooler's world can include:

- Tobacco
- Alcohol
- Prescription drugs and over-the-counter medicines (including vitamins)
- Cleaning supplies

Remember that at this age, children are not able to listen quietly for very long and are more interested in doing things for themselves.

The attitudes and habits children form at this age will have an important bearing on the decisions they will make regarding substance use when they are older. Even though it may seem that talking with your child at this age is premature, it isn't! It may not look like the typical "alcohol talk", as preschoolers are not old enough to take in complex facts about alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs, but there are things you can do.

At this age, children are eager to know and memorize rules, and they want your opinion on what's "bad" and what's "good." Share your family values about "right" and "wrong" and role model those values through your behaviors.

Parenting Tips

- ✓ Encourage healthy eating and living
- ✓ Teach what is real and what is not
- ✓ Play and spend quality time with your child
- ✓ Avoid dangerous substances in your child's world
- ✓ Build decision-making skills
- ✓ Teach personal responsibility
- ✓ Teach prosocial behavior